

Minutes of Cultural and Historic Resource Sub-Committee

June 8, 2010

Approved 7.15.10

Present: Kim Grimes, Cathy Stump, Janet Lyons, Virginia Davidson (Seashell City), Chris Clark, Harry Haon, Mary Pat Kyle and Agnes DiPietrantonio.

Absent: Winnie Lewis, Tracy Lewis

Members of the Public Present: None

Meeting called to order 1:35 PM by Agnes DiPietrantonio

Housekeeping items

- Due to a meeting at 2:30 in the same room, this meeting will adjourn at 2:25

Motion to approve minutes of May 11, 2010 – Chris Clark

Second – Kim Grimes

Discussion – None

All in favor

Minutes of 5/11/2010 approved

Report on the minutes of the off-site meeting on 5/21/2010 at 31 W Atlantic Street.

- Kim Grimes added that the times of the planned walking tour have changed. Dr. Grimes distributed a new proposal for activities.
- Old Fenwick Island Day is planned for August 11, 2010. No rain date.
- Copy of proposed agenda/activities attached.

Status of C&HP Sub-committee

- In Winnie Lewis' absence, Agnes DiPietrantonio advised the members of a proposal to dissolve the sub-committee that will be discussed at the Planning Commission meeting at 2:30 pm (copy attached).
- A lengthy discussion followed (audio minutes available at www.fenwickisland.delaware.gov)
- Members determined to continue with plans for Old Fenwick Island Day 2010
- Members determined to request that the Planning Commission and the Town Council continue its support of their efforts

NEXT MEETING DATE- none set

Kim Grimes is hosting a "Share a Memory" cocktail party at her home located at 31 W Atlantic St in Fenwick Island on Tuesday, June 22, 2010 time 6:00 pm (copy of flyer attached).

Motion to Adjourn –Chris Clark

Second –Harry Haon

All in favor.

Meeting adjourned 2:10 PM

Respectfully submitted - Agnes DiPietrantonio TOFI recorder

Proposal for summer 2010 Old Fenwick Island Day

Date: Wednesday, August 11th (second choice August 4th)

*Change
6/8/2010*

- 1) **Exhibit in Town Hall** (9am to 5pm): 6 poster boards with photos, menus, ads, & newspaper clips:

- 1 dedicated to pre-1930s
- 1 dedicated to 1930s-1940s
- 1 dedicated to 1950s
- 2 dedicated to 1960s
- 1 board with Charlie Hall's postcard collection

Volunteers: 8 people to host the exhibit (2 people for 2 hours each)

1 or 2 people to write the text

~~1 or more people to assist Agnes with selection of material for boards~~

1 person to assist staff in mounting boards on wall (Bill?)

~~**Staff:** Agnes to mount photos, etc on poster boards~~

- 2) **Walking Tour of early (pre 1962) commercial businesses who structures still remain.**

Begin tour at 9:30am in Town Hall with 2 guides.

8 stops. Variety of businesses that make a tourist town: restaurants, hotels, beach supplies, shell shop, general store. Each person will speak for 10 minutes at each stop.

- 9:40am: in front of Columbia Electric (**Bennie's General Store**). (Winnie)
- 10:00am: **Warren's** (Paula)
- 10:15am Sands Motel (**Tingle's**) (Bud Tingle)
- 10:25am **Dairy Queen** (Don Conaway)
- 10:45am Nantucket's (**FI Sub Shop**) (Kimberly)
- 11:10am: Atlantic Book Store (**Sea View**) (Betty Bates/ Cathy)
- 11:30pm: **FI Crab House** (Scott)
- 11:55 pm: Sea Shell City (**Ruth's Shell Shop**) (Virginia). End of tour. People can continue with a visit to the Discovery Museum.

Meeting of the Cultural and Historic preservation Sub-Committee Meeting
Friday, May 21, 2010 1:30 pm
31 West Atlantic Street, Fenwick Island

5/21/2010

In attendance: Cathy Stump, Paula Mumford, Kimberly Grimes and Janet Lyons. Winnie was also there for a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 1:30pm.

I) Plan of Action for Old Fenwick Island Day for August 2010 was discussed.

Date: Wednesday, August 11th (second choice August 4th). The day will include two events.

A) Exhibit in Town Hall (10am to 4pm): 5 (6?) poster boards with photos, menus, ads, & newspaper clips:

- 1 dedicated to pre-1930s
- 1 dedicated to 1930s-1940s
- 1 dedicated to 1950s
- 2 dedicated to 1960s
- 1 possible board with Charlie Hall's postcard collection

Volunteers: 6 people to host the exhibit (2 people for 2 hours each)
1 or 2 people to write the text
~~1 person to assist Agnes with selection of material for boards.~~
1 person to assist staff in mounting boards on wall (Bill?)

Staff: Agnes to mount photos, etc on poster boards

placed on 6/8/2010

B) Walking Tour of early (pre 1962) commercial businesses who structures still remain.

Begin tour at 11am in Town Hall with 2 guides.

8 stops. Variety of businesses that make a tourist town: restaurants, hotels, beach supplies, shell shop, general store. Each person will speak for 10 minutes at each stop.

11:10am: in front of Columbia Electric (Benny's General Store). (Winnie)

11:30am: Warren's (Paula)

11:45am: Sands Motel (Tingle's) (Diane Tingle/Paula)

12:10: Dairy Queen (Don Conaway/ Kimberly)

12:30pm: Nantucket's ~~(FI Sub Shop)~~ (Kimberly)

12:50pm: Atlantic Book Store (Sea View) (Betty Bates/ Cathy)

1:10pm: Crab House (Scott)

1:30pm: Sea Shell City ~~(Ruth Shell Shop)~~ (Virginia/Kimberly). End of tour. People can continue with a visit to the Discovery Museum.

*replaced
on 6/8/2010*

Note: the first person's name is who we would like to speak to the people about the history of the commercial establishments; if it is followed by a second name, that is the committee person who volunteered to contact the person we would like to speak.

II) A draft of ideas for a 3 year plan for the subcommittee was also discussed. The plan is intended to be a beginning point. Additions, revisions and other ideas are encouraged by all committee members.

3 year plan for FI Historical SubCommittee

Goal: to collect and preserve archival materials and artifacts that tell the history of Fenwick Island. Present these materials, along with speakers and/or events, for the general public. The ultimate goal is create a museum for the town and a book.

2010:

- Old FI Day: Exhibit and walking tour of early commercial establishments
- Continue collecting oral histories, photos and archival materials
- * Host "share a memory cocktail party" to collect stories for the exhibit (Kimberly). *June 22, 2010*
- Meet with representatives about the future of the lighthouse and asst. lightkeepers' home (Winnie, Kimberly & ???).

2011:

- Old FI Day Fair (fundraiser): Invite restaurants and shops to do samplings (similar to the Chamber's taste event) and share in FI history. Include reproductions of old photos and postcards to sell. Exhibit of poster boards from 2009 and 2010 with text in Town Hall.
- Continue collecting oral histories, photos and archival materials
- Continue discussion with representatives about the future of the lighthouse and asst. lightkeepers' home.
- Write an article for DE Historical Society journal on Fenwick Island (Kimberly).
- Write a prospectus for book on Fenwick Island history (Kimberly & ?) . Volume to follow up on Mary Pat's wonderful book.

2012

- Organize materials created to date for a permanent museum exhibit.
- Collect artifacts.

- Write the book.
- See where we are at with the purchasing of asst. lighthouse keeper's property and creation of a National Monument.

Other business:

1) Subcommittee members will visit the DE Archives in Dover on June 3rd to recover more photos and historic information.

2) "Share a Memory" cocktail party will be hosted by Kimberly at her house, 31 W. Atlantic Street at 6pm, on Tuesday, June 22, 2010. The subcommittee members are looking to invite 30 or so people who have worked in a business in Fenwick anytime before 1975. Please send names, mailing addresses and email addresses (if available) to Kimberly asap so invitations can be sent.

Meeting adjourned at 3pm.

Minutes submitted by Kimberly Grimes

Share a Memory Cocktail Party

Cultural & Historic Preservation Sub-Committee
Join the Fenwick Island Historical Committee for drinks
and hors d'oeuvres at Kimberly and Marco's house.

*The goal: to collect memories of Fenwick's summers gone
by beach jobs and histories of our early commercial
establishments.*

Date: Tuesday, June 22, 2010

Time: 6pm

Location: 31 West Atlantic Street, Fenwick Island

*Regrets only: kimandmarco@comcast.net or leave a message at
302-539-1827*

*If you can't make it, enclosed is a form to jot down a short story or
brief memory or even just a line or two about working in Fenwick,
and return to:*

Kimberly Grimes, 31 W. Atlantic St., Fenwick Island, DE 19944

Regarding the Status of the Cultural and Historic Preservation Sub-committee Presented to the Planning Commission of The Town of Fenwick Island – June 8, 2010

As per the stated goals of the Comprehensive Plan, a recommendation was made to establish a Cultural and Historic Preservation Commission. Town Council discouraged the formation of a Commission and so empowered the Planning Commission to form a sub-committee to carry out certain goals of the plan pertaining to preservation efforts.

- Definitions to be considered:

Cultural Resources: Tangible and intangible assets that help make a given community special. These resources range from events, organizations, historical elements, districts, people and specific sites.

Historic Resources: Tangible and intangible assets of historical value. These resources range from events, organizations, historical elements, districts and specific sites.

Incentives: Motivators that attract individuals to comply with certain guidelines. Incentives can be utilized to attract developers and ensure they comply with certain development guidelines as required by a governing body.

- Two scenarios were proposed:
 - The redevelopment of older beach cottages was mitigated through new historic and cultural resource preservation measures and residential design guidelines. Incentives were created to preserve the cottages as a part of residential redevelopments. The design of new residences was also influenced to minimize their bulk and mass, along with other considerations.
 - Another possible scenario suggests that developers will be looking to acquire older, low-density properties in order to replace them with larger structures and higher density configurations, thus maximizing the value and return on investment of the lot. Examples of this practice can be seen in town in the form of large structures built to the maximum size allowed by zoning. While this practice raises home values and positively contributes to the economy, it begins to change the scale of historic town development patterns while also changing the overall community character. The 2000 US Census notes that approximately 25 percent of Fenwick Island's housing stock was constructed before 1960, making these houses eligible for consideration as historic structures. In 2007, the Town estimated this same number at 16 percent. While the US Census may have been slightly inaccurate, this decrease in older homes may also be a sign that redevelopment of residential lots is replacing aging structures. A historic structures inventory has not been completed by the State Historic Preservation Office.

Issue: Approximately 16 percent of the Town's housing stock was built before 1960, making several houses eligible for historic structure review.

Goal: Residential structures are an important contribution to the Town's character. Residences constructed before 1960, if deemed to have historical significance, should be preserved.

Objectives:

2.7 Complete a Historic and Cultural Resources Inventory.

- Create a Cultural Resource and Historic Commission.

- Work with the State Historic Preservation Office to update inventory review for state and local significance

Regarding the formation of a Commission, the Planning Commission formed a sub-committee to:

- Assess interest in preservation efforts
- Inventory/identify properties that might be eligible for historic status
- Promote educational efforts

An inventory was conducted by the Town in concert with the State of Delaware Historic Preservation Office. No structures were identified by the State Office as having historic significance as per their guidelines.

A new focus for Fenwick Island

As stated in The Plan:

"The new floor area provisions cap house size at 7500 square feet, or 70 percent of the total lot area, whichever is less. While the desire to maximize financial gain through redevelopment is certainly understandable, the impact of redevelopment projects on Fenwick Island's overall character can be detrimental.

Redevelopment projects should continue to be closely monitored for their consideration of community character and impact on cultural and historic resources, and additional building design restrictions may be a tool to further preserve community character through redevelopment."

Issue: The community is at risk of losing potential historic and cultural resources as redevelopment becomes more prevalent.

Goal: Certain structures, such as the older beach cottages, are an important component of the Town's character and should be considered in redevelopment scenarios.

Objectives:

4.3 Create incentives to preserve the older beach cottages and other historic and cultural resources.

Issue: The larger community is also at risk of losing potential historic and cultural resources as redevelopment becomes more prevalent in unincorporated Fenwick Island.

Objectives:

4.4 Establish intergovernmental agreements to enable joint planning for the area surrounding incorporated Fenwick Island.

- Create a historic overlay district with incentives to protect and enhance the Fenwick Island Lighthouse in any potential redevelopment.
- Initiate redevelopment by engaging the property owners in a collaborative and open planning process.

4.5 Cooperate with Sussex County to work with the State Historic Preservation Office to review and update its list of potential resources in both unincorporated and incorporated Fenwick Island.

Commercial Architectural Character

The commercial area of Town generally consists of one- to two-story masonry structures oriented towards SR 1. The earliest buildings were constructed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Several buildings of architectural significance exist. While they may or may not be eligible for historic resource inventory, they are iconic and contribute to the Town's diverse architectural character. Examples

include: Warren's Station (located between Indian and Houston Streets), the Sands Motel (located between James and Indian Streets), the Fenwick Medical Center and Seaside Country Store (located between Georgetown and Farmington Streets), and the Fenwick Village (located between West Virginia Avenue and Maryland Avenue).

Redevelopment

As a result of its popularity as both a tourist and residential destination, and the associated increase in property values that has followed, Fenwick Island has seen a significant amount of redevelopment over the past couple decades. Much of this redevelopment has occurred on residential lots, but there have been recent indicators that commercial properties may be redeveloped in the near future as well. In many instances, redevelopment projects have created new structures that often do not meld with the Town's cultural and historic character. The Town has taken steps to guide future redevelopment projects; however, it is suggested that additional guidelines and regulations be developed to help both residential and commercial redevelopment projects enhance Fenwick Island's community

Recommendations

1. Efforts were/are being made to promote an awareness of the rich cultural heritage of the town and of the entire area previously known as Fenwick Island, Maryland and Fenwick Island, Delaware. This Planning Commission recommends that these efforts might be better accomplished by a group of citizens from the area who could form an independent entity outside the auspices of the governing body of The Town of Fenwick Island. The Town will continue to contribute to the group by hosting access to digital recording of photos and written/oral histories as well as by featuring this content on its Facebook page. The Town, further, will continue to cooperate with Sussex County and the State of Delaware in its preservation efforts.
2. We further recommend that Town Council make every effort to consider the cultural and historic setting of an area when being developed/redeveloped. We ask that Town Council adopt guidelines intended to set forth the best practices for the treatment of historic properties. For property owners, residents, contractors, and design professionals, the guidelines will provide direction in planning projects sympathetic to the special character of the Town. For Planning Commission members, the guidelines will offer a basis for evaluating proposed changes. In reviewing applications, the Planning Commission/Town Council/Board of Adjustments will consider the property itself, the street context within which it is located, and the special character of the entire area.

These recommendations have been made at a meeting of the Planning Commission on June 8, 2010. The Planning Commission membership accepted the motion to adopt and approve recommendations #1 and #2 as following:

Motion to accept Recommendation #1:

Second:

Discussion:

Vote:

Motion to accept Recommendation #2:

Second:

Discussion:

Vote: